

New Roosevelt Scholars Program Would Fill "Mission Critical" Federal Jobs

Washington, D.C. - U.S. Reps. David Price (D-NC) and Mike Castle (R-DE) today introduced legislation to create a graduate-level scholarship program for students who commit themselves to public service. The Roosevelt Scholars Act, would provide a much needed pipeline of professional talent for the federal government, which faces an unprecedented workforce crisis.

The federal government's ability to effectively perform essential functions depends on a well-trained and highly engaged federal workforce. But in the next five years, approximately one third of the government's top scientists, engineers, physicians, mathematicians, economists, and other highly specialized professionals will be retiring, according to the Government Accountability Office (GAO). Unfortunately, the flow of talent stepping forward to replace these valuable federal employees continues to dwindle.

Named after President Theodore Roosevelt, the father of the modern civil service, the Price-Castle bill would initiate a major recruitment effort that utilizes our nation's expansive network of colleges to meet vital government staffing needs and serve the American public. The Roosevelt Scholars Act will (1) create a new, elite scholarship program to fund graduate-level study in exchange for a civil service commitment in targeted, mission-critical occupational areas across the federal government; and (2) establish a Foundation to administer the application process, selection of scholars, and ongoing support activities associated with these scholarships.

"We face a crisis of capacity to continue providing the services that Americans depend upon," said Rep. Price, who co-chairs the Congressional Service Caucus. "By investing in personnel with advanced degrees, we can create a high performing workforce and rededicate government to exceptional professional standards in the service of the American people. Roosevelt Scholars would reaffirm to our nation's college and university students that there is no higher calling than public service."

"As the cost of higher education steadily increases, public service positions remain a viable option for students," said Rep. Castle, a senior member on the U.S. House Education and Labor Committee. "To encourage young people to serve our community, incentives like tuition assistance can help government jobs compete with the higher salaries in the private sector. The

Roosevelt Scholars program will do just that by creating a new scholarship to fund graduate-level study in exchange for a service commitment in targeted occupational areas across the federal government."

The Roosevelt Scholars program would provide full tuition, support for room and board, and a stipend for graduate study. In exchange for this support, Roosevelt Scholars would complete an internship with a federal agency and, upon graduation, complete a minimum of three years of civil service.

#